

Light:

A Journal of Psychical, Occult, and Mystical Research.

"WHATEVER DOETH MAKE MANIFEST IS LIGHT."—Paul.

"LIGHT! MORE LIGHT!"—Goethe.

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CONTENTS.

Notes by the Way	13	Jottings	20
Sir Edward Arnold in Japan	14	Thought-Transference without Contact	22
Experiences of Rev. Minot Savage	15	Psychic Telegrams	22
Dr. Cyriax on Mediumship	17	Generous Words and Generous Deeds	23
Mr. Crookes on Psychical Phenomena	18	A Difficulty	23
Precocity	19	Sankeyism and Spiritualism	23

NOTES BY THE WAY.

Contributed by "M.A. (Oxon.)"

A BATCH OF BOOKS.

Thomas Brevior gives us a little seventy-three page booklet, *Echoes from Bygone Days*. (Allmans, 67, New Oxford-street.) The early pages are concerned with "Love Lyrics," the later with "Character Sonnets." Among these latter are found some inscribed to initials of well-known names, "A. M. H. W.," "W. T.," and "M. E. T." "J.M.P." will easily be recognised. Two specimens alone space permits:—

To J. M. P.

Pilgrim in many a distant land,
And over many a sea,
Sowing around with open hand
All kindest charity;
Nor shall it fall on stony ground;
Although it seem to die,
The golden harvest shall be found,
The fruitage far and nigh.
Oh, not on Earth, in Time alone,
But through Eternity,
We reap the harvest we have sown,
The richer life to be.
Immortal blooms the flower of love,
Fragrant in Paradise above.

To M. E. T.

Gentle and gracious as the summer air,
Serene and placid as the evening sky,
Yet full of human feeling, tender care
For all who need thy care; when thou art nigh
With kindly sympathy, thy influence,
Like genial atmosphere with healing balm,
Soothing the o'er-wrought brain and weary sense,
Brings to the troubled heart thy own deep calm.
If there be truth in legend quaint and old,
That in compassion to our human kind,
Spirits of finer, more ethereal mould
Become incarnate, one in thee we find.
The angel soul with mortal form doth blend,
The perfect wife and mother, neighbour, friend.

Spiritualists owe a great debt to one who has been for more years than I like to think of an able and discreet supporter of our faith.

The *English Lyceum Manual* reaches me from Mr. Kersey (Newcastle-on-Tyne). It is designed to be a manual for use in what Spiritualists elect to call Lyceums, schools for the education of the young in the faith that is their parents'. It long since became a necessity to have some distinctive training for our children, having regard to the fact that in the average Sunday-school they were taught that which we should *not* teach them, and were not

taught that which we *should* inculcate. This is a children's edition of the *Manual*, and contains, beside instructions for the management of Lyceums, some hymns and sacred songs to the number of one for each day in the year. Many are beautiful; all breathe the spirit of pure Spiritualism. I anticipate that this little book will be found very useful.

Lucasta: Parables and Poems, by Arthur E. Waite (J. Burns), is a quarto of less than 100 pages by the author of *Israfil* and a *Soul's Comedy*. Mr. Waite's poetry has attracted favourable notice in the Press as at once powerful and graceful. The *Spectator*, *Guardian*, *Graphic*, and *Literary World*, among other organs of opinion, praise his work, and our own notice of *Israfil* in "LIGHT" will be remembered. The present volume seems to bear out the promise of the past. This is graceful verse:—

A haunted house where ghosts and mortals dwell
Together, in a city of the dead—
The dreadful city of the dead in soul—
I, bent on secrets to be won from death,
Ambitious of the dream'd-of life beyond,
And ardently, incessantly devoured
With aspirations to prolong life's line
Round all the circle of eternity,
Sought out, won entrance, took my place assigned,
Among the hushed and necromantic throng,
And round a table such as Merlin planned,
We communed nightly with the men called dead.

And this may be a not inappropriate motto for this journal:—

Light from the mind of man, the soul within,
The deathless spirit overbrooding both,
Light out of fancy lands, from elfin shores,
Light from imagination's loftier realms,
Life from the desolate, the awful wastes
Of magic worlds involved by woful spells—
Light concentrated, light ineffable,
Light shall be round us. . . .

A Chaplet of Amaranth, by the author of *From over the Tomb* (J. Burns), is a brief collection of brief thoughts on this life and the next. These are in the form of aphorisms, sufficiently suitable as texts for meditation on spiritual subjects, such as "The Mystery of Man's Nature," "Prayer," "The Spiritual World," "Death, Heaven, and Hell." A few examples:—

Mercy is the charity of God.
Conscience is the voice of God.
Prayer is converse with God.
Spirits can help a man on earth toward Heaven, and in Heaven toward God.
Death should neither change our Master nor our service.
All essential religion is within the comprehension of a child.

The Temple of Humanity and other Sermons, by the Rev. H. N. Grimley, M.A. (Kegan Paul), is a volume that deserves the consideration of those whom I am accustomed to address. Thoughtful and striking, these sermons have a breadth of mind in them and a persuasiveness of utterance

which are rarely met with. There is a wholesome mysticism running through them which is the note of a mind that recognises the truth that spiritual things are spiritually discerned. The English of the author is clear and good. Such sermons as those entitled "Children of Light," "Obedient to the Heavenly Vision," "The Sepulchre in the Garden" are specimens, selected almost at random, from among Mr. Grimley's sermons in this volume.

The Education of Man, by J. G. Speed (Authors' Co-operative Publishing Co.), is a small volume of essays dealing with "Education," "Self-esteem," and "Friendship and Love."

A voice like that of an accusing, but gently pleading spirit, whispers thus to my countrymen:—Oh men, you have tried innumerable remedies and expedients to bring comfort and ease to your weary and jaded hearts: try a little soul.

Dealing with the subject of the observance of the law of affinity, which is the sole and simple essence of all friendship, of all love, one of the chief causes of unhappiness in this life is the absolute compulsion put upon us to mingle with, and be studiously civil and complaisant towards, those with whom we do not feel in soul-harmony.

Mr. Speed has drawn many illustrations of his ideas from sources which show a wide area of reading.

Education conducts us by easy transition to Mrs. Boole's *Logic Taught by Love* (Edwards, High-street, Marylebone), which hardly comes within our scope. Mrs. Boole considers that "our life is being disorganised by the monotony of our methods of teaching." She has accordingly provided a medley, respecting which she puts into the mouth of a reader the inquiry, "Is it a text book of logic, a pious exhortation, or a treatise on mythology?" This is not the place, nor is it my business to answer that question; but the contents of the little volume are decidedly varied.

The *White Cross Library* numbers for November and December are concerned with "The Material Mind v. the Spiritual Mind" and "Marriage and Resurrection." In answer to some inquiries I recommend intending purchasers of next year's series to procure their copies by post direct from the publisher, F. J. Needham, New York, U.S.A. We cannot supply single copies; the price is severe and the supply irregular.

I set out to review what is certainly a remarkable book, a book of even intense power—*Letters from Hell*, originally published in Denmark eighteen years ago, and fathered in England by Dr. George Macdonald. But I have abandoned the attempt. It is a gruesome and grisly book, and, in my judgment, radically and essentially untrue. There is no hope in it from title page to finis. And who is this anonymous writer who presumes to out hope out of any part of man's existence here or hereafter? Dr. Macdonald says it is full of imaginative energy. It is. But the imagination is riotous and ignorant, and the energy is misplaced. He says also that the book is full of truth. I do not so believe. God forbid that it should be. There is in it just that half truth that is proverbially worse than a lie. It is an "awful verity" that "we make our fate"; it is also a very encouraging truth. Dr. Macdonald finds somewhere in this grim correspondence from a lost soul—let us be thankful that it exists only in the fevered and distorted imagination of this anonymous Dane—"faint, all but inaudible tones of possible hope." They are so "faint" that I cannot see them, so "inaudible" that I cannot hear them, so little "possible" in the light of what the author persistently depicts that I should not like to depend on such a "perhaps" for the lightest boon that I might ask. Dr. Macdonald thinks that we have abolished hell in these days. He may

congratulate himself on having introduced to the English public a brand-new one, worse than the diseased mind of the most morbid monk ever pictured. He says, finally, that the close of this dreadful book is "altogether admirable, in horror supreme." The latter clause is unquestionably true; the former as undoubtedly false. I disown the—shall I, dare I say—Gospel that it preaches, as a libel on God and a needless and false terror to man.

A GRATEFUL ACKNOWLEDGMENT.

We have once more to express our deep sense of obligation and gratitude to our unknown friend for his munificence. We shall give particulars in due course when our many supporters have had an opportunity of associating themselves with the work which they value.

SIR EDWIN ARNOLD IN JAPAN.

The following extract from a recent letter of Sir Edwin Arnold's to the *Daily Telegraph* will be read with interest:—

Between a small temple and the Tortoise Rock a long line of images of Amida, the *Amitaya*, or "Measureless One" of Indian Buddhism, was ranged. We counted 126—there may have been more. Some were new, some very old—all bore in their sculptured features the same traditional placidity of expression, the same carefully-preserved benignity of air, which the rudest artists of this cult have known how to perpetuate in representing the Buddha or his incarnations. Some charming verses, sent to me by a Californian lady named Annie Herbert Barker, of San Rafael, seem to express the spirit which was visible in the passionless countenances of all these Buddhas with such felicity that it might almost be thought this gifted writer had herself viewed the rushing Japanese river, the "Mountain of the Typhoon," all the marks and memorials of earth's restless life, and amid them those records in ancient stone of the unalterable tranquillity, the unshaken content, the immeasurable aspirations of the Buddha. Her verses run:—

To hear in old words, breathing balm,
The secret of the Wordless Calm,
The equipoise of chastened will,
The Master's comfort, "Peace, be still!"

To search tear-bordered lids between
Until each wandering soul, serene,
Finds in Nirvana of the blest
A mother's arms, a lover's breast.

O, Unseen Presence! Constant Power!
That comprehends our little hour,
Because Thou art, though unconfessed,
When Nature faints we feel Thee—Rest!

Thy Light, which is not Sun or Star,
But clear as Heavenly haloes are,
Illumes the path our feet must tread,
Thy pity folds us, quick and dead.

So, cradled in immensity,
Troubled or still my couch may be
What time in tranqed dusk I wait
The turning of the Key of Fate!

The wayside avenue of Buddhas showed nearly every figure with prayers and wishes written on slips of paper and pasted on the breast, or little stones marked and laid in the lap of the "Unspeakable." Buddhism is deeply ingrained—albeit with corruptions—in the minds and hearts of this people. They have the Goma (Sanskrit, *homa*), and the Ingwa, or doctrines of Karma and Transmigration; the priest's scarf is Kesa (Sanskrit, *Kashaya*), and the Maye-dachi, the image on the altar, together with the altar itself, recalls with much precision Indian and Singhalese models. The Rim-bo, "Wheel of the Law" (*Chakra* in Sanskrit), is constantly carved and painted. As I write these words a deputation of Japanese Buddhist priests enters my room at the British Legation to invite me to lecture on the Holy Places of the Faith to the Tokio Brethren, and afterwards to dine with them *more Japonico*. They bring with them a translation into Japanese of "The Light of Asia," and are friendly, courteous, and accomplished gentlemen.

THE REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE'S EXPERIENCES WITH SPIRITUALISM.

In the December *Forum* one of the acutest and most unbiassed minds in America introduces to the readers of a high-class magazine some problems connected with his experiences in Spiritualism. The article is too long to be reproduced *in extenso*, nor is it necessary for us to dwell on the introduction in which Mr. Savage justifies himself before a sceptical public for meddling with this subject; and states, quite fairly, our claims as Spiritualists. We say that this is no new thing on the earth—witness the experiences of the Wesleys in England and of Dr. Phelps in Connecticut, as correlated with many ancient and historic records. We say that we do not assign these occurrences to causes called supernatural, or miraculous. They occur in the natural order of things. That is a fair way of stating some of our claims.

MODESTY SHOULD CHARACTERISE OUR UTTERANCES.

Mr. Savage points out that Hypnotism, Clairvoyance, Thought-transference, all once scouted, are now generally accepted as established facts. He says very cogently that "in a universe the size of this a modest scientific man will hesitate about declaring as to what is or what is not impossible." If we find a "fact," room must be made for it somewhere. He had therefore personally searched for facts, and had carefully ruled out everything that did not happen under conditions suited to exact observation. Hope and Belief are not Knowledge. These facts, about to be submitted for discussion, find no place in the generally recognised scientific order of the world. Respecting them he seeks to know "whether they have any bearing on the nature and destiny of man. Do they require for explanation the agency of invisible intelligences? or, can they be referred to the working of embodied minds?"

That certain things to me inexplicable have occurred, I believe. The negative opinion of some one with whom no such things have occurred, will not satisfy me. Some of those who know the least about such matters will doubtless inform me that I have been deluded, and that my supposed facts are not facts at all. But so long as they do not know the care I have taken, nor the circumstances, and are ignorant of how many times I have repeated the same experiment, this proposed explanation will hardly satisfy me. Neither will it be quite enough to tell me how a similar thing may be done under other conditions. I know all this already, but this knowledge has no bearing on my particular series of facts.

TELEPATHY OR APPEARANCE AT THE MOMENT OF DEATH?

I wish to submit a case that I suppose falls under the head of telepathy. Out of many I choose this, for the following reasons: It is unquestionably true. Names, dates, and all details are accessible. The distance across which the line of communication stretched was enormous. The fact was not expected, and could not have been anticipated. No ordinary method of communication, not even the telegraph, was possible. It is not different in kind from a thousand others; but, like a taller mountain among its fellows, it stands out with peculiar distinctness as a remarkable specimen of its kind.

A merchant ship, bound for New York, was on her homeward voyage. She was in the Indian Ocean. The captain was engaged to be married to a lady living in New England. One day, early in the afternoon, he came, pale and excited, to one of his mates and exclaimed: "Tom, Kate has just died! I have seen her die!" The mate looked at him in amazement, not knowing what to make of such talk. But the captain went on and described the whole scene—the room, her appearance, how she died, and all the circumstances. So real was it to him, and such was the effect on him of his grief that, for two or three weeks, he was carefully watched lest he should do violence to himself. It was more than 150 days before the ship reached her harbour. During all this time no news was received from home. But when at last the ship arrived at New York, it was found that Kate did die at the time and under the circumstances seen and described by the captain off the coast of India.

This is only one case out of hundreds. What does it mean? Coincidence? Just happened so? This might be said of one case; but a hundred of such coincidences become inexplicable. Did some invisible intelligence convey the news? Did he really see her? Or did she, in that hour, reach out with such a longing that she touched him half-way round the world?

As Mr. Savage well says (in effect) this is a good case, but the ponderous volumes of the Society for Psychical Research contain many to the full as good, verified with all the elaborate care for which the Society is celebrated, and all tending to prove, if they do not absolutely demonstrate, the power of the spirit of man to dispense with its bodily organs, so as to manifest its existence under some overmastering impulse.

PHENOMENA USUALLY CALLED PHYSICAL.

Of these Mr. Savage has some good cases. It does not escape his criticism that the term "physical" is badly applied to them, "for the intelligence of somebody has always been mixed up with them." But call them what you please—posterity will settle that—they are here, and here is one:—

I have had several experiences that have demonstrated to me that physical objects are sometimes moved in a way that cannot be accounted for by any muscular power, or by any mere physical force with the workings of which I am acquainted. I was sitting one evening at the house of a friend, a lady whom I had known for eight or ten years. Neither she nor her husband was a Spiritualist; but that which, for want of a better name, we call psychic force was sometimes manifested in her presence. Both she and her husband were simply inquirers, as I was. At the end of the evening I rose to go. Many inexplicable things had already occurred. Then I thought I would try a simple experiment. She and I stood at opposite sides of the table at which we had been sitting. Both of us having placed the tips of our fingers lightly on the top of the table, I spoke, as if addressing some unseen force connected with the table, and said: "Now I must go; will you not accompany me to the door?" The door was ten or fifteen feet distant and was closed. The table started. It had no casters, and in order to make it move as it did we should have had to go behind and push it. As a matter of fact, we led it, while it accompanied us all the way and struck against the door with considerable force. I then lifted it and carried it back into the middle of the room. My friend then stood at the end of it opposite to me while I stood at some distance away, between it and the door. I addressed it again, as though talking to an intelligent being, and said: "Will you not lift for me the other end of the table?" My friend stood with only the tips of her fingers touching the upper side of the table near the end. Immediately the end of the table next to her was lifted into the air, and the table went through a motion as if bowing to me, bending over as far as her arms could reach. In this case I might have been suspicious of some possible trick, but for two considerations. First, I knew and trusted my friend; secondly, I could plainly see the hands, and knew that the thumbs were not under the edge of the table. Besides, I had learned before, under other conditions, that this power of moving physical objects did exist.

And here another: "I am ashamed to think how much evidence I need of these things," an eminent man once wrote to Mr. Crookes. Mr. Savage's lawyer friend felt the same need. And it is very noteworthy that those who confine their attention to the physical phenomena—the husks—are perpetually wanting their supply renewed. They have not got at the kernel, which alone can feed:—

I add one more experiment of my own. I sat one day in a heavy stuffed arm-chair. The psychic sat beside me, and laying his hand on the back of the chair, gradually raised it. Immediately I felt and saw myself, chair and all, lifted into the air at least one foot from the floor. There was no uneven motion implying any sense of effort on the part of the lifting force; and I was gently lowered again to the carpet. This was in broad light, in a hotel parlour, and in presence of the keen-eyed lawyer friend. I could plainly watch the whole thing. No man living could have lifted me in such a position, and besides, I saw that the psychic made not the slightest apparent effort.

Nor was there any machinery or preparation of any kind. My companion, the lawyer, on going away, speaking in reference to the whole sitting, said: "I've seen enough evidence to hang every man in the State—enough to prove *anything excepting this!*"

Here we have a conclusive piece of evidence of a force exerted under remarkable conditions:—

Mr. Crookes, of London, relates having seen and heard an accordeon played on while it was enclosed in a wire network, and not touched by any visible hand. I have seen an approach to the same thing. In daylight, I have seen a man hold an accordeon in the air not more than three feet away from me. He held it by one hand, grasping the side opposite to that on which the keys were fixed. In this position, it, or something, played long tunes, the side containing the keys being pushed in and drawn out without any contact that I could see. I then said: "Will it not play for me?" The reply was: "I don't know; you can try it." I then took the accordeon in my hands. There was no music; but what did occur was quite as inexplicable to me, and quite as convincing as a display of some kind of power. I know not how to express it, except by saying that the accordeon was seized as if by someone trying to take it away from me. To test this power, I grasped the instrument with both hands. The struggle was as real as though my antagonist were another man. I succeeded in keeping it, but only by the most strenuous effort.

PHENOMENA THAT MAY BE CALLED MENTAL.

Here Mr. Savage finds the mass of material bewildering. He confines himself to cases in which information unknown to the medium was unquestionably conveyed, "Of course, they may be mind-reading, if someone will tell me what mind-reading is."

This case works in exactly with one in my own experience, in which an old friend returned and gave evidence of his identity by the use to his widow of a pet name known among those present only to herself.

The first time I was ever in the presence of a particular psychic, she went into a trance. She had never seen, and so far as I know had never had any way of hearing of, my father, who had died some years previously. When I was a boy he always called me by a special name that was never used by any other member of the family. In later years he hardly ever used it. But the entranced psychic said: "An old gentleman is here"; and she described certain very marked peculiarities. Then she added: "He says he is your father, and he calls you—," using this old childhood name of mine.

But our quotations are getting long. Where all is so good, so clearly put, it is hard to pick, but this is distinctly good:—

One case more only will I mention under this head. A most intimate friend of my youth had recently died. She had lived in another State, and the psychic did not know that such a person had ever existed. We were sitting alone when this old friend announced her presence. It was in this way: A letter of two pages was automatically written, addressed to me. I thought to myself as I read it—I did not speak—"Were it possible I should feel sure she had written this." I then said, as though speaking to her: "Will you not give me your name?" It was given, both maiden and married name. I then began a conversation lasting over an hour, which seemed as real as any I ever have with my friends. She told me of her children, of her sisters. We talked over the events of boyhood and girlhood. I asked her if she remembered a book we used to read together, and she gave me the author's name. I asked again if she remembered the particular poem we were both specially fond of, and she named it at once. In the letter that was written, and in much of the conversation, there were apparent hints of identity, little touches and peculiarities that would mean much to an acquaintance, but nothing to a stranger. I could not but be much impressed.

Now, in this case, I know that the psychic never knew of this person's existence, and of course not of our acquaintance. But I got nothing that I did not know, and so I am not sure that this went beyond the limits of telepathy. But, if telepathy, it was entirely unconscious on the psychic's part. And in this case there was no trance. I could fill one number of the *Forum* with cases of this sort.

CASES THAT ADVANCE THE ARGUMENT STILL FURTHER.

These, two only of which we can find room for now, are concerned with the gathering, at the moment, of information previously unknown to anyone visibly present at a séance.

In the first case the medium is a private friend mentioned or alluded to before:—

At another sitting with the same psychic friend, again there purported to be present the "spirit" of a lady I had known for years. Her father's family and mine had been intimate when we were young. If still conscious, she knew I was greatly interested in all that pertained to their welfare. She told me of a sister married and living in another State. She said: "Mary is in a great deal of trouble. She is passing through the greatest sorrow of her life. I wish I could make her know that I care. I wish you would write to her." As we talked the matter over, she explained it to me, telling me at first vaguely, as though shrinking from speaking plainly, and then more clearly, making me understand that the husband was the cause of her sorrow. I had not seen her husband more than once, and had never dreamed that they were not happy. And the psychic had never heard of any such people. In this case, also, I wrote to the lady. I told her I would explain afterward, but for the present asked her only to let me know if she was in any special trouble; and provided she was, and the nature of it was such that she could properly do so, to tell me what it was. I received a reply, "private and confidential," confirming everything that had been told me in the privacy of my own study, and she closed by asking me to burn the letter, adding that she would not for the world have her husband know that she had written it.

In the next case, Mr. Savage's story needs no comment:—

But one more case dare I take the space for, though the budget is only opened. This one did not happen to me; but it is so hedged about and checked off that its evidential value in a scientific way is absolutely perfect. The names of some of the parties concerned would be recognised in two hemispheres. A lady and gentleman visited a psychic. The gentleman was the lady's brother-in-law. The lady had an aunt who was ill in a city two or three hundred miles away. When the psychic had become entranced, the lady asked her if she had any impression as to the condition of her aunt. The reply was "No." But, before the sitting was over, the psychic exclaimed: "Why your aunt is here! She has already passed away." "This cannot be true," said the lady; "there must be a mistake. If she had died they would have telegraphed to us immediately." "But," the psychic insisted, "she is here. And she explains that she died about two o'clock this morning. She also says a telegram has been sent and you will find it at the house on your return."

Here seemed a clear case for a test. So, while the lady started for home, her brother-in-law called at the house of a friend and told the story. While there the husband came in. Having been away for some hours he had not heard of any telegram. But the friend seated himself at his desk and wrote out a careful account, which all three signed on the spot. When they reached home—two or three miles away—there was the telegram confirming the fact and the time of the aunt's death, precisely as the psychic had told them.

Mr. Savage is throughout in an interrogative mood. He wants to know what these things mean. Well, he has contributed some good cases to a mountain of similar ones; and he concludes with some much-needed words of caution:—

Psychical and other societies that advertise for reports of strange phenomena must learn that at least a respectful treatment is to be accorded, or people will not lay bare their secret souls. And then, in the very nature of the case, these experiences concern matters of a most personal nature. Many of the striking cases people will not make public. In some of those above related I have had so to veil facts that they do not appear as remarkable as they really are. The whole cannot be told.

The Liverpool Children's Progressive Lyceum may, we hope benefit by a sale of work at Daulby Hall on Tuesday, February, 18th, 1890. Any of our readers disposed to assist are invited to communicate with Miss Morse, 16, Stanley-street, Fairfield, Liverpool.

POSTSCRIPT TO "ON MEDIUMSHIP."

BY DR. CYRIAX (EDITOR *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter*).

TRANSLATED BY "V."

We feel it necessary to add a few words to our treatise "On Mediumship," which has just been published in the last twelve numbers of *Neue Spiritualistische Blätter*, so that our readers may be quite clear as to our position with regard to this subject. We have intended for some time past to once more discuss thoroughly the question of mediumship, and the causes why so many honest and well-informed persons are repelled from making further investigations into Spiritualism, as soon as they obtain the opportunity of being present at séances, such as we have by the hundred.

We were quite aware that in so doing we should be obliged to touch upon many weak points, but we considered it our duty to combat the prejudices and weaknesses in our own ranks as fearlessly as we should do those of our opponents, and are prepared to bear the consequences. On account of the way we have exposed the weak side of our cause, four subscribers have given us up, and we have received several letters contradicting our statements; these, however, come from persons who have only experimented with one or two mediums, who value the truth and are not actuated by vanity or personal advantage, and who, therefore, have been spared painful experiences. On the other side we have received a great number of letters expressing full concurrence with our views; among them is one from a lady, a very good medium, who says that most of the persons who come to her have no wish to become Spiritualists, in the noblest sense of the word, but are only actuated by curiosity and love of the marvellous to wish to see something new, and that their first question often is, "How can I become a medium?"

We were visited to-day by a very intelligent man, who has seen much of the world, and who told us he was so repelled by the untruths and trivialities of many unprogressed spirits that he would have given up Spiritualism altogether, had he not opportunely become acquainted with a medium, a simple woman, through whom wonderful truths were brought to light, but who, at the same time, was so modest that she never thought everything that came through her spirit controls must be true, and left the communications to be estimated at their real worth by competent judges. This medium would say: "This is what I have received from the spirits; whether it is true or false I am incapable of judging, I only repeat it as it is given to me." This is the right way to act, but unfortunately we find few such mediums; most of them think that what their spirit controls tell them *must* be true, just because it comes from spirits. The idea that everything coming from a spirit must necessarily be true, does more harm than almost anything else, and is one we ought strongly to combat. Just as injurious is the notion that we have to do with high spirits of light, and are in direct communion with Jesus, the Apostles, even with God Himself, and that, as such spirits must know everything, all they tell us must be true.

We read in the *Medium and Daybreak* of May 17th of a medium, who asserted that he was controlled only by very high spirits, among whom were Luther, Calvin, Melancthon, and others; once, however, when a certain sceptical Dr. Gallagher was present at the circle, and he placed these high spirits in an awkward predicament by the questions he put to them, the supposed Calvin betrayed himself as a dangerous vagabond; he caught hold of a chair (in the person of the medium) and would have seriously injured Dr. Gallagher, if the other members of the circle had not seized the medium and brought him out of his trance. It is just the same with all others who have the presumption to assert that they are only controlled by "high spirits," and if, with us in Germany, it has not been carried so far as for such a spirit to attack anyone, the spirits often get angry and say very unpleasant things when they are reproached with their untruthfulness and conjured to leave the paths of deceit. When we think over what we have read in a book, as communicated by high spirits, about the universe, the moon—which some of them say is a sort of lunatic asylum for dead men—about the planets, the sun and the fixed stars, and even about the central sun of the universe, as well as about gravitation and other laws of nature, &c., &c., which these spirits desire to have printed and published to the world, we must admit that to do so is the most likely way to bring discredit upon Spiritualism altogether, for the greater part of such communications are not

only contrary to the conclusions of science, but even to what is absolutely known to be fact.

* * * *

What we have said in this treatise is the result of ripe reflection and of the experience of eight years in Germany,* not from love of fault-finding, but because we looked upon it as absolutely necessary for once to point out the reasons which impede the progress of our cause, and make us defenceless against the remarks of people of culture, who assert that everything which comes from the spirits is rubbish, religious twaddle, or evident untruth.

* * * *

In conclusion, we will once more summarise the fundamental principles which we think are absolutely necessary to be observed.

A man is a spirit in the body, and a spirit is a man apart from the body; we are, therefore, all spirits, whether we still live on earth or have already left the mortal body. Now, as daily, nay hourly, thousands of embodied spirits become disembodied (that is, die),—a motley company, from the prince to the pauper—it is self-evident that the inhabitants of the other world must be as great a mixture, with regard to morality, disposition, and knowledge as are we ourselves in this world. As on earth human beings are divided into different groups, so the departed, in accordance with their inclinations, feelings, and desires, are separated into different societies, who do not come into contact with each other unless they wish to, just as happens in this world. It is self-evident that the less highly developed men possess, as spirits, the greatest facility of communicating at circles, and that with a higher degree of Spiritual development a stage is reached when the spirit is no longer capable of coming in direct contact with what is material. It is likewise evident that this stage will be very soon arrived at by morally and spiritually highly-developed men, and that, therefore, the best men can only remain in communion with the earth-sphere for a comparatively short time, and—this we wish particularly to impress upon our readers—that high spirits, that is, those who have reached the above-mentioned stage of spiritual development, can no longer have direct intercourse with the earth.

We scarcely need to remark on the absurdity of thinking that a Socrates, a Plato, a Humboldt, or a Goethe, or a Schiller could find any interest in manifesting to a few peasants in some obscure corner of the earth, as we have been told in writing of their doing. What motive could they have in so doing? When, therefore, spirits give themselves out to be "high spirits," they are for the most part only lying or personating ones, and the sooner they are got rid of the better, for they only tend to foster conceit in the medium. We should try to form circles and to develop mediums, not for the purpose of astonishing the world, but for that of communicating with our friends and relations, who will be able to give proofs of their identity, and thereby demonstrate the truth of immortality. From what we have said, it is clear that among men who have died are to be found every kind of spirit, truthful and lying, stupid and clever, good and bad, earnest and silly, in every shade of variety, and that the thousands who every minute pass over to the other world arrive just as they are when they quit this, and as, before they died not everything they said or did was true, clever, or in accordance with the facts of science, so, after they have passed over, all they do or say cannot be true or clever; and thus the idea that everything coming from a spirit must be in accordance with truth, and that we should reverence a spirit as a higher being, is shown to be a false one. We hope that what we have said will be accepted in a friendly spirit, as we have only written it from love to our cause and that of truth.

We owe an apology to the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*. Our memory played us false in attributing to the *Banner of Light* the publication of Epes Sargent's "Devotional Spiritualism." These admirable papers appeared in the *Journal*. We hasten to rectify our error. We may add that the collected articles with many MS. prayers and papers of a cognate kind have passed into the possession of Mr. Stainton-Moses and that he is not without hope that some leisure in the future may enable him to prepare them for publication. They are eminently worthy of it.

* Dr. Cyriax had previously been a student of Spiritualistic phenomena in America for many years.—TRANSLATOR.

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Light:

EDITED BY 'M. A. (OXON.)'

SATURDAY, JANUARY 11th, 1890.

TO CONTRIBUTORS.—Communications intended to be printed should be addressed to the Editor, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi. It will much facilitate the insertion of suitable articles if they are under two columns in length. Long communications are always in danger of being delayed, and are frequently declined on account of want of space, though in other respects good and desirable. Letters should be confined to the space of half a column to ensure insertion.

Business communications should in all cases be addressed to Mr. B. D. Godfrey, 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to the Editor.

MR. CROOKES ON PSYCHICAL PHENOMENA.

The Fifteenth Part of the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research contains matter of great interest, which we hope to recur to. The most interesting of the articles to Spiritualists is Mr. Crookes's "Notes of Séances with D. D. Home." And the most interesting part of that article to us is the personal introduction prefacing the Notes. For it has been repeatedly asked why the records of so competent an observer, with such facilities for witnessing occult phenomena as few can command, had never seen the light since 1874. A censorious world assumed that he had seen the error of his ways, and had renounced the great delusion.

This publication of these few records, and the expression of opinion which prefaces them, is, therefore, more than usually important, because it dispels a wide misconception. Nothing can be more simple and direct than Mr. Crookes's affirmation of the persistence of the belief which he startled the world by affirming in the years 1870 to 1874. That which he believed then he believes now. The importance which he attached to the phenomena then observed he still holds to "as of deep importance to science." He has "nothing to retract or to alter." He has "discovered no flaw in the experiments then made, or in the reasoning based upon them."

It will be seen that Mr. Crookes's introduction to his "Notes of Séances" is of importance enough to warrant our presenting its material points in summary.

It was in 1874 that Mr. Crookes, having put forth various articles in the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, then under his editorship, announced his intention of publishing a book dealing with his observations on psychical phenomena. These he describes as "numerous, printed and unprinted." That work, by reason of pressure on his time, has never seen the light. "The chemical and physical problems of my professional life," he tells us, "have become more and more absorbing." Few fresh opportunities for observation have been available; credulity and fraud are as rampant as ever, interfering with the "recognition of new truth of profound interest."

He seems to see in the Society for Psychical Research "a body of inquirers of whom the more prominent are, so far as I can judge, quite sufficiently critical in their handling of evidence making for extraordinary phenomena, while they bring to the task that patience and diligence without which an investigation of this sort is doomed to failure." Perhaps a nice sense of hearing detects a trifle of veiled satire in the phrase "quite sufficiently critical"—perhaps it is our fancy or hallucination. But, at any rate, Mr.

Crookes has felt that he "ought not to decline" to contribute to the pages of their *Proceedings* the distinction conferred by some of his "Notes on Séances with D. D. Home."

He is not satisfied with these bricks which were to go to build a contemplated edifice. "But at least they are accurate transcripts of facts which I still hold to be of deep importance to science. Their publication will, at any rate, show that I have not changed my mind; that, on dispassionate review of statements put forth by me nearly twenty years ago, I find nothing to retract or to alter. I have discovered no flaw in the experiments then made, or in the reasoning I based upon them."

Mr. Crookes goes on to say that he is aware of the various exposures of fraud on the part of mediums, and that "some members of the Society for Psychical Research have shown the possibility of fraud under circumstances where Spiritualists had too readily assumed it was not possible." We are not quite clear what it is to which Mr. Crookes here alludes. His statement is guarded and cautious, as becomes a man of science. As a matter of fact, conjuring can simulate most occult phenomena, if the conjurer be granted his own conditions. How little able it is to reproduce the phenomena of Spiritualism under the same conditions the history of Mr. S. J. Davey in connection with the Society for Psychical Research abundantly demonstrates.

It is satisfactory to have from Mr. Crookes an explicit statement that in D. D. Home's case, though on his guard, he "never detected any trickery or deceit whatever, nor heard any first-hand evidence of such from other persons." He thinks, moreover, that "the evidence for the genuineness of the phenomena obtained by Home seems to be strengthened rather than weakened by the discussions on conjuring, and the exposures of fraud which have since taken place." This is unquestionably the case. A real service has been done to us by attempts to explain occult phenomena by conjuring. Only strong prepossession can fail to see the intrinsic and radical difference between the two things. In this position—from which we have never wavered—we are strengthened by the support of Mr. Crookes. "The object," he says, "of such discussions [on conjuring] is to transform *vague* possibilities of illusion and deception into *definite* possibilities. So far as this has yet been done, it has, I think, been made more clear that certain of Home's phenomena fall quite outside the category of marvels producible by sleight of hand or prepared apparatus." This, in relation to a controversy between Spiritualists and some members of the Society for Psychical Research, is a very important and notable utterance.

Mr. Crookes is far from pretending that all, or even most, of his recorded phenomena were such as no juggling can simulate. Neither do we make any such claim. But we do assert, as a matter of simple logic, that no critic has a right to expound, as satisfactorily explanatory, a theory that does not cover the whole area of these phenomena.

Mr. Crookes concludes his introductory remarks by stating that his object in publication now is to induce competent observers to repeat similar experiments with accuracy and in a *dispassionate spirit*. The words which we have italicised are very important. For the eye often sees what the observer brings with him; and a dominant antagonistic will can easily demonstrate that in its presence nothing of a psychical nature can occur. Experience should have long ago taught us so much as that. Credulity is bad, but there is a credulity of incredulity which is worse. "The dispassionate spirit" let us have by all means.

A final pronouncement of Mr. Crookes's is not less weighty: "Most assuredly, so far as my knowledge of science goes, there is absolutely no reason *a priori* to deny the possibility of such phenomena as I have described.

Those who assume—as is assumed by some popular writers—that we are now acquainted with all, or nearly all, or even with any assignable proportion of the forces at work in the universe, show a limitation of conception which ought to be impossible in an age when the widening of the circle of our definite knowledge does but reveal the proportionately widening circle of our blank, absolute, indubitable ignorance."

We reserve some notices of the "Notes of Séances."

PRECOCITY.*

The knowledge that man is not a body endowed with a soul, but a soul endowed, or rather hampered, with a body, not only makes the solution of the great problem of life somewhat easier, but causes certain unusual phenomena of that life which are generally considered as being simply curious and unintelligible, instructive and to some extent intelligible.

The "infant prodigy," too often used as a money-getting machine by its possessors, is a "phenomenon," and as a "phenomenon" it is treated. The cause of the phenomenon is said to be "precocity," "abnormal development," in fact, anything or everything one chooses to assert, when there is not the most remote inkling of true interpretation. Yet it does seem that this question of precocity, in whatever form it may be presented, is not only of great interest in a general sense, but also on account of the light it throws on the relation of the spiritual to the material body.

The phrase "in whatever form the question may be presented" is used advisedly, for accustomed as we are to evidence of early developed intelligence we are apt to ignore the even more frequent evidence of very early developed moral depravity.

Frederic van de Kerkhove, landscape painter, died at Bruges on August 12th, 1873, a month before the completion of his twelfth year. On September 15th, 1874, the *Journal des Beaux Arts* of Brussels published an account of young De Kerkhove's life and work, which account was reprinted in pamphlet form.

"Fritz," as the boy was familiarly called, seems to have been a sickly child :—

His head was large, he was extremely thin—he played little, ate much, and could not quench his thirst. He often asked if he was going to die. . . . When he was about seven years old, his intelligence developed suddenly. Subjects requiring exactitude influenced him but little, while at the same time he showed strange varieties of tendency. Thus he played cards with marvellous coolness and with all the ability of an old player, whilst he found it difficult to understand the laws which assert that two and two are four. His thoughts often went out beyond this earthly life, and he asked for information as to the life to come.

The child, whose father was himself an artist, never learnt to draw, yet at seven years of age "he sketched a whole series of small, but perfectly characterised, landscapes." He would not use a brush as a rule, but did everything with the palette-knife. He painted on everything that presented a surface for painting, notably on old cigar boxes. His preference was for melancholy subjects, and though the writer of the pamphlet says that he received early impressions from the *dunes* of Blankenbourghe, yet that "he got instruction, inspiration, execution, experience, where geniuses get them."

This is the description of a picture produced by the child in 1870, that is, when he was eight years old. The painting is about seven inches long and four inches broad :—

A pool of water on the left with masses of stone on the right of the pool. In the background, right in the middle, a mountain, here and there the blurred outlines of trees, a grey, cloudy sky, getting brighter in the distance . . . the light just com-

ing in on the left. And nearly the whole of this is done with the palette-knife and the fingers. The effect is extraordinary, for one feels *intention*, and one sees its effect.

Before he reached the age of ten the child had changed his style somewhat and improved in his execution. Says M. Adolphe Siret, the author of our pamphlet, with some enthusiasm :—

Three sunsets especially (about four inches by two inches) are, in the truest acceptance of the term, masterpieces. It is impossible to describe the poetry and harmony which pervade them. There are things which make one weep without our knowing why. These three panels are such things.

We have to note here that there appears to have been no instruction given at all in the ordinary sense of the word ; the boy drew without learning to draw, he painted without learning to paint, and he grouped without learning the art of grouping. Moreover, the pictures, which were very numerous, were always very small ; the largest known was not a foot long, and only about five inches high. Yet in these small dimensions, according to M. Siret, there was displayed a wealth of emotional and artistic power which would not have disgraced Hobbema, Van Goyen, or Decamps.

All this so puzzled the artists of the day that M. Siret went to Bruges a year after the boy's death and interviewed —alas ! that we should ever get used to that word—young De Kerkhove's father. It was necessary to discover the influence which produced such astonishing effects. And this is what M. Siret says : " In the six or seven hundred pictures which adorn the walls of the house I have been unable to discover the origin of the grand tone which pervades all the pictures of Fritz. One work, signed Corot, of delicious freshness and tone, may possibly explain up to a certain point his manner of working in some cases, but that is absolutely all that it does, for this Corot is nothing but light and gaiety, while Fritz is always melancholy and austere." . . . There were also in the house a Ruysdael and a Van Goyen side by side, in front of which the sick boy often lay in contemplation. " I should not be at all surprised," says M. Siret, " to find that this Ruysdael had exercised a decisive influence on his faculties, and that one could, if one wished, discover in his works, as it were, a far off echo of the profound talent of the great master."

Of course, and after having asserted of Frederic van de Kerkhove that *he painted what he saw*, we get to an echo of Ruysdael, somehow working back through what are called *faculties*.

This certainly was written fifteen years ago, and many things have happened since that, and the word *faculties* would hardly be used so loosely now as it was then. The higher-self would probably take its place. That higher-self, receiving its impressions from the Corot or the Ruysdael, would filter them through the boy's sickly body, turn those impressions from their original brightness into the fixed melancholy that appears to have pervaded the pictures.

In the present transition state of our knowledge it would be presumptuous to say that some such explanation, put into more exact language, is not the true one. Nevertheless, if the world of spirit is full of disincarnated intelligences ; some of whom are not only sad, but seem incapable of throwing off that sadness except through the aid of humanity, is it not at least equally possible that an unhappy but strong spirit became incarnate, and in its hurry and in its sadness developed the body irregularly and abnormally, while it told its story in some way to the world ?

This whole question of "precocity" is fraught with interest, and we have a good deal of well-established fact in connection therewith ; Mozart and Grotius are cases in point. The field has hardly been entered from the Spiritualist side, yet it is a field of considerable promise for the investigator. From the abnormal the laws of the normal may often be found.

* Frederic van de Kerkhove: *Sa Vie et son Œuvre*. (Brussels, 1875.)

JOTTINGS.

The source of the following remarks is the *St. James's Gazette*, which, in one of the many articles on Browning that have appeared since his departure from among us, touches on his views of this life in relation to the next. We confess to a sense of relief in finding an interpreter, for Browning wrote much, and the molten fire of his thought has sometimes, and not infrequently, cooled into words that need interpretation.

This is that to which we desire to draw attention :—

Browning held firmly by the belief that this life was but a school, a term of probation preparatory to another fuller and higher existence.

Grow old along with me !
The best is yet to be,
The last of life, for which the first was made.

How, he asked not ; for the way lay with God.

God's task to make the heavenly period
Perfect the earthen.

That this is a topsy-turvy world, where evil often triumphed and good suffered, did not dismay him ; for he asks :—

Are we not here to learn the good of peace thro' strife,
Of love through hate, and reach knowledge by ignorance ?

The evil and sorrow in this world gave him, in fact, a strong argument in favour of another existence, to which this life was but the opening scene.

I have lived then, done and suffered, loved and hated, learnt and taught,
This—there is no reconciling wisdom with a world distraught,
Goodness with triumphant evil, power with failure in the aim,
If (to my own sense remember ! though none other feel the same)
If you bar me from assuming earth to be a pupil's place,
And life, time—with all their chances, changes—just probation's space.

He therefore held, and this is the teaching of many of his poems, that experience gained in life—even by means of sin, failure, and weakness of will, and by those we are accustomed to despise and condemn—is stored for future use ; and he says :—

I search but cannot see,
What purpose serves the soul that strives, or world it tries
Conclusions with, unless the fruit of victories
Stay one and all, stored up and guaranteed its own
Forever, by some mode whereby shall be made known
The gain of every life. Death reads the title clear,
What each soul for itself conquered from out things here.

To one who held as a poet holds “by God's sun-skirts,” such a sublime faith, it was but natural that he should preach that this life should be one long act of strenuous unwearied endeavour.

Strive and hold cheap the strain,
Learn, nor account the pang I dare not judge the throe.

'Tis not what man does which exalts him, but what man would do.

And again :—

Aspire, break bounds ! I say
Endeavour to be good and better still,
And best ! Success is nought, endeavour's all.

The *Glasgow Herald* contains one of the best, most temperate and appreciative notices of Browning that we have seen. The writer, who evidently knew the poet well, records a conversation :—

It seems but a day or two ago that the present writer heard from the lips of the dead poet a mockery of death's pitiful vanity—a brave assertion of the glory of life. “Death, death ! It is this harping on death I despise so much,” he remarked with emphasis of gesture as well as of speech—the inclined head and body, the right hand lightly placed upon the listener's knee, so characteristic of him. “This idle and often cowardly as well as ignorant harping ! Why should we not change like everything else ? In fiction, in poetry, in so much of both, French as well as English, and, I am told, in American art and literature, the shadow of death—call it what you will, despair, negation, indifference—is upon us. But what fools who talk thus ! Why, *amico mio*, you know as well as I that death is life, just as our daily, our momentarily, dying body is none the less alive and ever recruiting new forces of existence. Without death, which is our crape-like churchyard word for change, for growth, there could be no prolongation of that which we call life.”

The *Nonconformist* gives the following incident which throws light on the poet's religious belief. In 1876 a lady who believed herself dying wrote to Browning to thank him for help derived from his poems. He replied :—

19, WARWICK CRESCENT, W.

May 11, 76.

DEAR FRIEND,—It would ill become me to waste a word on my own feelings except inasmuch as they can be common to us both in such a situation as you describe yours to be—and which, by sympathy, I can make

mine by the anticipation of a few years at most. It is a great thing—the greatest—that a human being should have passed the probation of life and sum up its experience in a witness to the power and love of God. I dare congratulate you. All the help I can offer, in my poor degree, is the assurance that I see ever more reason to hold by the same hope—and that by no means in ignorance of what has been advanced to the contrary ; and for your sake I would wish it to be true that I had so much of “genius” as to permit the testimony of an especially privileged insight to come in aid of the ordinary argument. For I know I myself have been aware of the communication of something more subtle than a ratiocinative process, when the convictions of “genius” have thrilled my soul to its depths, as when Napoleon, shutting up the New Testament, said of Christ—“Do you know that I am an understander of men ? Well, He was no man !” (*Savez-vous que je me connais en hommes ? Eh bien, celui-la ne fut pas un homme.*) Or as when Charles Lamb, in a gay fancy with some friends as to how he and they would feel if the greatest of the dead were to appear suddenly in flesh and blood once more—on the final suggestion, “And if Christ entered this room ?” changed his manner at once, and stammered out—as his manner was when moved, “You see—if Shakespeare entered, we should all rise ; if He appeared, we must kneel.” Or, not to multiply instances—as when Dante wrote what I will transcribe from my wife's Testament—wherein I recorded it fourteen years ago—“Thus I believe, thus I affirm, thus I am certain it is, that from this life I shall pass to another better, there, where that lady lives of whom my soul was enamoured.” Dear friend, I may have wearied you in spite of your good will. God bless you, sustain, and receive you ! Reciprocate this blessing with yours affectionately, ROBERT BROWNING.

A friend of Browning's tells this anecdote in the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—

Apocryph of “Mr. Sludge, the medium,” I once had a talk with him about Spiritualism. He was entirely sceptical about the whole business, and was inclined to give a natural explanation of all such phenomena as really occur. “Yet,” he said, “I will tell you a curious story. When I was in Italy I met an Italian count who had a great reputation as a clairvoyant, and who was well aware that I had not the slightest belief in his pretensions. One day he said to me, ‘Mr. Browning, I know you deny that I possess any unusual gifts as a Spiritualist or a thought-reader. But will you test me ? Have you, for instance, anything about you to which any story is attached ?’ I said, ‘No, I have nothing of the kind.’ A moment afterwards, however, I remembered that I had. A great uncle of mine (I am not sure that this was the exact relation) was murdered in Jamaica by slaves, and I happened to be wearing that day a pair of sleeve-links which had been taken from his murdered body. So I corrected myself, and said, ‘Oh, yes, I have some trifles of which a story is told.’ ‘Let me see them,’ said the count ; and I laid them in his hand. He looked at them for a moment or two, and then suddenly lifted his eyes to my face and said, ‘Do you know that, strange to say, as I look at these sleeve-links, I hear a voice ringing in my ears “Murder ! murder !” I cannot explain the incident,’ said Mr. Browning, ‘but it occurred to me that the count was probably a very quick observer ; that he had noticed some passing expression on my face which made him suspect that some tragedy was connected with the ornaments ; and on this he may have founded a lucky guess.’”

The following lines from *Paracelsus* were regarded by General Gordon “as of all the lines in English poetry which he had ever read his favourite,” almost daily repeated :—

I go to prove my soul ;
I see my way as birds their trackless way.
I shall arrive ! What time, what circuit first,
I ask not ; but, unless God send His hail,
Or blinding fireballs, sleet, or stifling snow,
In good time—His good time—I shall arrive.
He guides me and the bird. In His good time.

These, again, are touching lines to his wife :—

Think, when our one soul understands
The Great Word that makes all things new,
When earth breaks up, and Heaven expands,
How will the change strike me and you ?
In the house not made with hands,
Oh, you must let your brain prompt mine,
Your heart anticipate my heart,
See, and make me see for your part
New depths of the Divine.

The Westminster Play last year gave us some Spiritualism. It was the *Andria* of Terence. In the Epilogue we have Mysis, a Spiritualist, and Davus, an editor, among other characters. Roughly paraphrased, this is the action :—

MYST.—Who knows not me argues himself unknown. I am a seer, a Spiritualist. I can draw letters from the skies, and find cups and saucers which nobody has lost.

SIMO.—Drunk !

MYST.—No. This cup cheers but does not inebriate.

Taking leave, and putting a hand upon a table, it turns. Davus, the editor (secreted under it to secure copy), puts his head out and speaks. Mysis, alarmed, sees the head and cries,

"Who spoke?" and rushes affrighted from the room. Not very first-rate fooling, but enough for the purpose.

Lord Tennyson is not the only octogenarian who retains the fire and fervour of youth. Whittier, now in his eighty-third year, has just published a new poem of twenty-two four-line stanzas "Burning Driftwood." A specimen:—

Before my driftwood fire I sit
And see with every waif I burn
Old dreams and fancies colouring it,
And folly's unlaidd ghosts return.
Of ships of mine whose swift keels cleft
The enchanted sea on which they sailed
Are these poor fragments only left
Of vain desires and hopes that failed;
And of my ventures those alone
Which love had freighted safely sped,
Seeking a good beyond my own
By clear-eyed duty piloted.

This from Alfred Austin's "Is Life Worth Living?" in the *English Illustrated Magazine*, has a true ring:—

Is life worth living? Yes, so long
As there is wrong to right,
Wail of the weak against the strong,
Or tyranny to fight;
Long as there lingers gloom to chase,
Or streaming tear to dry,
One kindred woe, one sorrowing face
That smiles as we draw nigh;
Long as a tale of anguish swells
The heart, and lids grow wet,
And at the sound of Christmas bells
We pardon and forget;
So long as Faith with Freedom reigns,
And loyal Hope survives,
And gracious Charity remains
To leaven lowly lives;
While there is one untrodden tract
For Intellect or Will,
And men are free to think and act,
Life is worth living still.

Mr. Frederick Harrison seems to find it hard to stir that philosophical little sect which some critics find funny, but which he takes very seriously. In his New Year's address he complained

It was a remarkable fact, however, that whereas scores of social movements received in abundance money gifts and loans of valuable works, while polytechnic and other institutions had endowments and contributions almost forced upon them, no philanthropist was found to offer help to men who ventured on a new system of practice or belief.

Whereupon the *Pall Mall Gazette* remarked:—

Mr. Harrison's experience is not unique. It takes a soul to move a body, and it takes a creed, more substantial than that of Comte, it seems, to extract a cent.

Does it, indeed, in the closing decade of the nineteenth century take a craven fear of hell to screw coin out of a man's pocket and make him do his duty? It looks like it.

Mrs. Hudson Tuttle gives good advice in a poem which she has written for the *Progressive Thinker*. Here is one stanza:—

Rev. Dr. Hale says that some people wear three kinds of trouble—
all they have had, all they have, and all they expect to have.

If instead of wearing trouble we could wear three kinds of joy:
All we have had, all we now have, and the all we hope to gain,
We should suit our own selves better, and not other folks annoy
With the croak of coming evil and the prophecy of pain.

N. B.—This little recipe will take you smoothly through:
Smile on and never trouble until Trouble troubles you.

Captain Burger, who served under General Faidherbe in Senegal, has been giving an interesting account of his own expedition upon the west side of Africa during the past two years. In the course of it he mentioned his interview at Kong with the Nuam, or religious chief, who has charge of the education of the people who profess the faith of Mahomet. They seem an advanced and tolerant people in their faith.

They all know that there are three main religions, which they call "roads," the roads of Moses, Jesus, and Mahomet. Not one of them, in the course of the many conversations I had with them, sought to prove that the Mahomedan religion was to be preferred to the others, and I should add to their credit that many of them told me that they regarded these three religions as identical because they led to the same

God, and that as all three of them comprised men of worth, there was no reason for proclaiming one to be the superior of the others.

The *Progressive Thinker* is a new Chicago paper edited by John R. Francis—who was, we believe, associated with the working of the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*—and devoted to a list of subjects that fairly takes one's breath away. Cremation as "a spiritual and sanitary necessity" seems to be a feature, and Spiritualism and allied subjects will all be treated. Hudson Tuttle, Mrs. Richmond, and other known names are among present contributors, and Andrew Jackson Davis is promised. It is a question in our own minds, however, whether we do not want concentration of effort rather than diversion of energy. Mr. Francis has a strong opinion of his merits and of his chances of success.

The *Spiritualists' Lyceum Magazine* is a neat, well printed monthly, edited by W. H. Wheeler, and sold for a penny. Its contents are concerned, as its name implies, with what is suitable for schools and with notices of what is being done in Lyceum work. We can have nothing but sympathy with every earnest and intelligent attempt to educate the children of Spiritualists in the faith of their fathers.

Mr. Edison, of world-wide fame, is a Theosophist. The President-Founder, before leaving England, on December 26th, wrote to us to the effect that he had seen a paragraph going the rounds of papers in denial. Colonel Olcott states that Mr. Edison joined the Society in 1878, and has never intimated his withdrawal. Immediately before his departure the Colonel went to Edison's office in Northumberland-avenue and got his general manager to attest Edison's signature and MSS. conveyed in a letter covering the signed forms of membership.

The *Banner of Light* (December 7th) prints a remarkable address delivered by Mr. J. Clegg Wright at the house of Mr. Henry J. Newton. It is entitled "Out of the Mould and the Decay of the Past Come the Fragrance and the Beauty of To-day." We wish our space availed for its reproduction.

Mrs. W. B. Lewis contributes to the *Women's Penny Paper* (December 14th) an article, entitled "The Rights of the Non-Human Races," an excellent and eloquent plea for mercy to our dumb friends, and a recognition of their rights. For they have rights, and we are, sad to say, slow to recognise them in those who cannot plead for themselves.

Wells v. Bundy has ended in a collapse. Colonel Bundy made some serious charges against Mr. Wells, a public medium, and was in court to sustain them, but the plaintiff's counsel refused to go with his case before an avowedly hostile jury. We doubt whether any jury could be empanelled that is competent to try, without fear or prejudice, the complex problems that would surround such a case: unless indeed the issue were narrowed down rigidly to the question of fraud. And then complications might arise.

Mrs. Margaret Deland, whose *John Ward, Preacher*, made such a striking sensation, is writing a new tale for the *Atlantic Monthly*. Good news, if it be anything like its predecessor.

Our thanks are due to our contemporary, the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*, for reprinting "M.A. (Oxon's.)" Notes on Ruskin and the "gods" with some very complimentary personal references.

The *Cornubian and Redruth Times* (December 27th ult.) has some notes by "Drus" on Clairvoyance, the Astral Body, and the apparatus devised by a French medical man, by which it is alleged that he can see the separation between the physical and spiritual bodies. We should like to look through that apparatus.

TRUTH.

Great truths are dearly bought. The common truth,
Such as men give and take from day to day,
Comes in the common walk of easy life,
Blown by the careless wind across our way.

Great truths are greatly won, not found by chance,
Nor wafted on the breath of Summer dream,
But grasped in the great struggle of the soul,
Hard buffeted with adverse wind and stream.

Wrung from the spirit in hard hours
Of weakness, solitude, perchance of pain.
Truth springs like harvest from the well-ploughed field.
And the soul feels it has not wept in vain. —ANON.

THOUGHT-TRANSFERENCE WITHOUT CONTACT.

The following account of a higher development of thought-reading than any yet recorded is from the *Pall Mall Gazette* :—

Mr. Edward Terry and Mr. Oscar Wilde were among the audience that recently gathered in Holborn Great Central Hall "to witness a psychological study illustrated by Dr. Onofroff, of Paris." The doctor turned out to be a tall, slim gentleman, and not a full-fledged doctor, but a medical student. Mr. Onofroff, who spoke in French (writes a spectator), told us in a few sentences that he possessed certain psychical powers which he could not explain, but which he proposed to use in thought-reading experiments. He invited us to select a committee who were to put him under strict conditions. The wish was acceded to, the two gentlemen before mentioned, with Captain Probyn and Mr. Herbert Burrows, composing the committee. The first experiment was the discovery of a crime. Murder, theft, and concealment were to be gone through, and then discovered by the thought-reader. He left the room and some of the committee gathered in a corner, where Mr. Burrows (figuratively) stabbed Mr. Edward Terry with a knife, stole a gold pencil-case from him, hid it in the pocket of another committee-man, and then concealed the knife under a hat. A fourth committee-man was then called forward and was told what had been done, and Mr. Onofroff was then brought in. He blindfolded himself, and was led to the fourth committee-man, who had been instructed to think intently of the order in which the crime had been accomplished. The thought-reader touched this committee-man on the head and body for a moment or two, and then without further contact with him, and in an intense state of nervous excitement, commenced to search for the murderer. He soon found Mr. Burrows—almost immediately after discovered Mr. Terry, who was in another part of the hall, and then the gentleman in whose pocket the pencil-case was hidden. He dragged from that pocket a silver flask, but we found afterwards that the stolen pencil-case was in the same pocket. In another minute or two he had found the knife, amid the loud cheers of the audience. The "thinker" had been directed before the experiment commenced to keep about a yard or two behind Mr. Onofroff, to stop him mentally if he were wrong, and encourage him mentally if he were right. The next experiment was even more interesting, as it bore on the celebrated contest between Mr. Labouchere, M.P., and Mr. Irving Bishop. Mr. Edward Terry wrote a number of four figures on a piece of paper, which no one but himself saw. The thought-reader, still blindfolded, wrote on the blackboard figures from 1 to 0 thus :—

1	2	3
4	5	6
7	8	9
		0

Mr. Terry was directed to stand by his side and think intently of the first figure of his number. A moment's touch of reader and thinker, and then without further contact the former's hand wandered quickly and nervously over the board from one figure to another. Presently he said he had the first, then the second was found in like manner, then the third, then the fourth, and 1,151 was chalked on the board by Mr. Onofroff, and was the correct number. The same experiment was tried with Admiral Sir Edward Inglefield, who thought of a date engraved inside his watch. This was not quite so successful, as the date written on the board was 1785, whereas the real date was 1782. Mr. Onofroff then left the room, and Mr. Oscar Wilde selected from a number of different business cards one which he showed the audience, the advertisement of some Portuguese house. The thought-reader, blindfolded, returned, touched Mr. Wilde for a minute, spread the cards out, and soon found the one chosen. A lady then mentally fixed on something for Mr. Onofroff to do. He took her from her seat for a moment and she then followed him to the end of the room. Soon he returned to her seat, in which she placed herself, and he then took a small bag from her arm, opened and took out her purse. This did not seem to satisfy him, so he placed the purse in the bag again, returned it to the lady, and then took it from her again and gave it to a gentleman sitting near her, whom we found to be her husband. This was what the lady wished done, and as the whole experiment was performed, like the others, without

speaking, it was also very much cheered. By this time Mr. Onofroff was very much exhausted, and the audience, declining to tax him any longer, separated with the evident impression that a new class of psychical phenomena had been brought under their notice, quite removed from any suspicion of mere muscle-reading. Among the last to leave was Mr. Burrows, who was explaining that, as a Theosophist, he thought he knew, although Mr. Onofroff did not, "how it was done."

PSYCHIC TELEGRAMS.

PART VI.

SPIRIT-INSPIRED WRITING THROUGH SISTER I.

IMMORTAL LOVE.

Eye of man hath never seen,
 Ear of mortal hath not heard,
 Human fancy hath not dream'd,
 All the joy, the life, the truth,
 All the endless sweet delight
 That may be found in spirit-life,
 For God is Love.

It is false to say that "Mortal life is but an heritage of woe." Heaven would reign on earth, your prophecies of glory and perfection of this world would all be fulfilled, did each man recognise himself as an eternal being, and seek his neighbour's good—not his own (this would be what you look for as the "Second coming" of your Lord), for this would bring that forgetfulness of self which raises man in upward world-leaps nearer to Divinity, which is Love.

You may gain knowledge which brings civilisation, you may acquire sciences which seem to render you as gods knowing good and evil, but these must fade and perish, unless washed in that everlasting fountain of Love which immortalises all it touches. This is the rightful destiny of man (the dwellers on this earth); this might, and will, be his life some day. This is his Future; and the "New Heavens," and the "New Earth" are but humanity living in Love.

Look not then on your world as a necessary ill, irremediable and only to be endured until you go to a happier one; you will not find another to suit you, unless you suit yourself in this one to your destiny, which is a high and holy one, for it is to tend your portion of this garden of the Lord, to carefully uproot the weeds and to watch and multiply the flowers.

Now, no man liveth for himself only; nay, neither doth he live for his own age alone (and herein is our happiness that we work for the Future); wherefore if you reap not the harvest yourselves, yes even if the plant you tend bloom not to your sight, still they will rejoice the heart and gladden the eyes of future beings, who shall dwell here, when you, far, far away in lovelier gardens, happier climes, shall still be working and enjoying (one cannot be without the other), and shall perchance look back on this "dreary world" then become the throne of Christ, the Love-God, and the heritage of your successors.

Is this a poor climax? Did you seek something more? Is working for others all that can be offered? Is this the highest enjoyment of which you are capable? Ah, if it be not so then you know not what Love is! Spell it how you will, in human, or in spirit language, yea, even ascend to the angels, and ask its sound in their speech, but never will Self enter into its composition. Thus you must learn that your future as well as your present happiness must consist in "labours of love," which do bring Heaven more near!

In this consists our life, our joy. Alone! we know no happiness, we know of no standing still, that would be death; and we live. Like Him, Who after He hath made still guardeth and loveth His creatures, and yet still ever worketh and loveth, so we work and love.

And you—(when you leave this world and cease to be mere man)—shall rest from your labours; the weary shall rest, and the wicked shall cease from troubling, and these labours shall be supplied by others; only you shall then find a swifter reward, fewer griefs and imperishable joys. Nor shall then the memory of a moment's joy be obliterated by hours of grief. Moreover then you shall look back and see that your labour has met its reward, and that the least deed of love has left an imperishable trace; yes, for even the slightest thought of self-denial shall shine as a jewel in a dark place.

He is highest and mightiest who lives most for others and for the Divine love. This is our wisdom, this is our life. Even so, even so! We turn to the Highest for happiness, and He sends it us in our own work, and its reward is—Love.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

Generous Words and Generous Deeds.

SIR,—Please put me down for £40 for the "LIGHT" maintenance fund, which sum I hope to continue yearly, increasing it if possible.

I do hope that some sacrifice will be made by the regular readers of "LIGHT" in answer to the appeal of the 21st ult. I have felt most anxious to say a word when the time came, as the niggardliness of Spiritualists generally, so often commented on in "LIGHT," seems to me such a terribly sad state of affairs. For myself, I feel it impossible to put into words my sense of the vast importance it is to us to have our faith so admirably represented as it is by "LIGHT"; and now that you, sir, so generously offer your whole time, energy, and intellect to the work, surely we will respond heartily, and prove our immense respect and admiration for your abilities and our sense of your exact fitness for the position of representative of the Spiritualists of England, by putting our hands in our pockets and helping to keep our paper going at all costs. May those with means feel impressed to give generously, may those with little at their disposal give heartily of that little. I am one of the latter class, and have besides to contend with the difficulty of my faith being held in horror by my nearest and dearest, so that my small economies must escape observation. But I want to urge on every true Spiritualist, everyone who has gained comfort and faith from the higher Spiritualism, to begin at the beginning of the New Year to save in small things for next year's need; it is wonderful, when one comes to try, how easily one can *do without*, and how respectable a sum can be put by when one's heart is in the cause.

K.

A Difficulty.

SIR,—I have been for some time inquiring into the very important subjects to which your valuable paper, "LIGHT," is devoted. This inquiry has been almost exclusively through the literature of the movement, which, though of a character less convincing than the actual witnessing of phenomena, is, I think, calculated to give a more embracing, and therefore truer, conception of it. The study of Spiritualism to me, reared from childhood in the orthodox creed, was an *astounding revelation*, but I will mention two facts only connected with it which were early impressed on my mind. The *first* was the weight of evidence in favour of the "Spiritual theory," i.e., that the circle of phenomena could only be fully explained on the assumption that disembodied human spirits were in communication with men in the flesh. The chief difficulty arising from this was that it was in direct opposition to my faith, and interfered with fundamental doctrines hitherto held sacred. Still, facts are facts, and I persevered. The *second* point, out of which arises the difficulty to be specially mentioned, is this, that the communications received from the other world are very contradictory, and therefore must be received with great caution. I proceed to give an instance, trusting its great importance will ensure its insertion in your pages.

It is well known that among educated thinkers there is in this world very great diversity of belief and opinion respecting the Christ. Every sect, every Church has its own conception—every philosophic thinker has the same. All who own Him claim Him as their ideal, no matter what their creed is. Well, this diversity of view seems to exist to an equal extent in the unseen world. What is a thoughtful truthseeker to make out of the mass of opposing testimony respecting the Christ coming through mediums? (1)

Take a few books recently published:—

1. *Hafed the Persian*. This is a book supposed to have been inspired by one of the actual *Maji* who came from the East to adore the infant Saviour, and though the portrait drawn is not after the Church idea, yet it maintains the existence and earth-life of the Personality fairly well on synoptical lines.
2. *Scientific Religion*. Here is another inspired book (2) of a very much higher order and presenting truth of quite a different character. Here Christ is spoken of as living in so exalted a sphere that direct communication with Him is impossible. Yet He does communicate through a chain of Angelic Media. This is a marvellous book. With one hand the author destroys, or at any rate weakens, the authority of the Gospels and Epistles by conceding largely to Biblical criticism, yet with the other he bases his arguments mainly on these writings and constantly quotes them in support of his doctrine.

3. *The Christian Spiritual Bible*. This is another inspired book, and in the prefatory matter accounts are positively given of the visits of materialised forms of many Bible saints. Among them the four Evangelists, St. Paul, the Virgin Mary, and—mark this—our Lord Himself. In a part of the work the story of His fourth incarnation is given in the words of the Gospel histories. (3)

I might go on but space forbids. Such serious discrepancies are known to advanced thinkers. It seems to me that all such revelations, like the earthly sects, assume that the Gospel history proves itself.

But take another book not inspired in the same sense as the above, of which I would speak, not dogmatically but only as a truth seeker. I mean *The Natural Genesis and Lectures* by Gerald Massey. Here there seems to be an honest attempt to deal with facts. Well, if Massey's facts are rightly interpreted, and if they can be confirmed by collateral evidence, we shall have to think twice before receiving such inspirations as referred to above.

This question of the Christ is a very delicate one, and I have no wish to treat it except with perfect truth and reverence, but it is most certainly of importance. In these days efforts are constantly being made to mingle and fit in the life presented in the Gospels with every increase of intellectual and spiritual light. We are surrounded everywhere with compromisers. Do you think, Mr. Editor, that there is a corresponding order in the unseen world inspiring such writers as those mentioned? I confess this question of the Christ is one of much difficulty. Light will be welcomed from any source, but facts are decidedly preferable.

S.K.

- (1) The communicating spirit knows no more than we do. Men do not gain all knowledge when they drop the body. The best and most trustworthy spirits appeal to reason in us. We must count heads there as here.
- (2) *Scientific Religion* was not, in the sense in which our correspondent uses the word, "inspired." It expresses the opinions of its author. We want a definition of "inspiration" before we can discuss differences of opinion in various works.
- (3) All such revelations are to be taken in a manner similar to that which a wise man would use in estimating pretensions made by a "spirit" incarnate. Are they reasonable? Are they probable? Are they supported by evidence? Not everything that a "spirit" tells us is necessarily true. Nor is it possible to get such communications pure. They are necessarily mixed with the preconceived ideas of the medium through whom they are conveyed, except in rare instances.—Ed. of "LIGHT."]

Sankeyism and Spiritualism.

SIR,—Is Sankeyism a stronger motive-power than Spiritualism? I came across the following in the *Echo* the other day:—

THE CHURCH IN THE HOUSE.

When St. Paul wound up his Epistle to the Romans with various salutations he bade them to greet the Church in the house of Priscilla and Aquila. I came across such an ecclesia last Sunday afternoon in the select suburban locality of Clapham Park. The houses in this region are villas, standing in their own grounds. Some time back it occurred to Miss Spicer-Jay, a lady living in one of these villas, to open her drawing-room for religious services for men on Sunday afternoons. Considering the locality, I should have said that it was a Quixotic enterprise; nevertheless, it has succeeded. The room holds about sixty or seventy, and it is well filled. For half an hour or more the congregation sing Sankey's hymns, led by an American organ, and then the lady of the house gives an evangelical address. The decorations of the room remain, but the floor is occupied with chairs like those at the Crystal Palace and other places of entertainment. The work has grown so much that a Sunday morning service is held for lads from eleven to twelve o'clock, and a Bible-class upstairs on Sunday afternoons. There is also a meeting for lads on Wednesday evenings, and a women's meeting once a week.

I have long been trying to organise a Spiritualistic service of this kind; but my difficulty has been to find a place. My own house is too far afield. Will no one do for Spiritualism what this Clapham lady does for Sankeyism? If they will, I will gladly give my time, and provide as hearty services and sermons (or lectures) as the genius of Sankeyism can secure. Will any one make the experiment during 1890, and start at once? That is the best way to put it.

A CHURCH OF ENGLAND CLERGYMAN.

Christmas Day, 1889.

SOCIETY WORK.

[Correspondents who send us notices of the work of the Societies with which they are associated, will oblige by writing as distinctly as possible and by appending their signatures to their communications. Inattention to these requirements often compels us to reject their contributions.]

MARYLEBONE LYCEUM, 24, HARCOURT-STREET, W.—The Lyceum was opened on Sunday with singing, as usual, followed by marches and calisthenics. The conductor gave a short address suitable to the time of year, and made a few remarks on our risen brother, Mr. Tomlin. There was a good attendance.—C. WHITE.

LONDON OCCULT SOCIETY, CARLYLE HALL, CHURCH-STREET (THREE DOORS FROM EDGWARE-ROAD, CLOSE TO STATION).—On Sunday next at 7 p.m., Mr. Maltby will deliver a lecture, entitled, "The Life and Work of W. Eglinton and other Mediums," illustrated by dissolving views. Mr. Maltby has collected a number of spirit pictures. It will be a most interesting occasion, and there will be no collection, the whole being entirely free. We hope that all who can will come. The following Sunday Mr. U. W. Goddard will lecture on "True Religion."—A. F. TINDALL, A. MUS. T.C.L., President, 30, Wyndham-street, W.

LONDON SPIRITUALIST FEDERATION.—A well-attended meeting (preceded by a capital public tea) took place on Sunday last, at Zephyr Hall, Notting Hill. Addresses were given by Mr. Emms, Mr. Rodger, Mr. Downing, Mr. White, Mr. Hopcroft, and Mr. W. E. Long. The meeting was presided over by Mr. W. O. Drake, whose statement as to the work done during the summer months in the open air was very satisfactory. Owing to the late hour of closing the service, the chairman (Mr. Emms) decided to call a meeting of the secretaries and delegates from the London Societies, on Thursday, January 16th, at King's Cross Society's Hall, 253, Pentonville-road, at 8.30 p.m.—W. E. LONG, Hon. Sec.

SOUTH LONDON SPIRITUALISTS' SOCIETY, WINCHESTER HALL, 33, HIGH-STREET, PECKHAM.—The half-yearly report shows a decrease of members and a heavy financial deficit. The new Executive will have a hard task, but we hope that by united action their efforts will be successful. The Executive now include Mr. Audy, president; Mr. J. Johnson and Mr. J. Sutcliffe, vice-presidents; Mr. J. Kemmish, treasurer; Mr. W. E. Long, hon. sec.; and a committee of seven members. On Sunday last we had some short but helpful addresses by members in the morning; and at 8.30 p.m., Mrs. Treadwell delivered a very practical address, which was much appreciated. Next Sabbath, a spiritual service at 11.15 a.m. prompt. In the evening at 8.30 p.m., address by Mrs. Stanley, after which a statement of the Society's future work will be given by the secretary, to be followed by a members' séance with Mrs. Watkinson. The children's anniversary service will be held on Sunday, January 19th; and on Monday, 20th, at 6.0 p.m., the children will have their prize and social gathering. Parents and friends are invited. We should be glad to receive any assistance in aid of the little ones, as expenses are heavy, and we wish the children to have a happy time. On the same evening at 8.30 p.m., there will be a soirée for the elder folk. Tickets 6d. each.—W. E. LONG, 79, Bird-in-Bush-road, S.E.

ZEPHYR HALL, 91, BEDFORD-GARDENS, SILVER-STREET, NOTTING HILL-GATE.—On Sunday afternoon last, our tea meeting was carried out with much enjoyment and enthusiasm, under the auspices of the Kensington and Notting Hill Spiritualist Association. Between eighty and ninety persons sat down to tea at five o'clock; for the management of which the thanks of the committee are due to Mrs. Drake, helped by active and willing friends. The meeting was held at an opportune time, for in the evening we had the pleasure of greeting the London Federation. Next Sunday, at 11 a.m., Mr. Hopcroft; afternoon at 3 p.m., first meeting of the New Lyceum. Friends are urgently requested to attend and bring or send their children. Evening at 7, Mr. J. Veitch. Choir practice at 68, Cornwall-road, Friday evening at 8. Help required. A benefit séance will be held at 34, Cornwall-road, Bayswater, W., on Wednesday evening, 15th inst., on behalf of Mrs. Cogman; medium, Mr. J. Hopcroft. Admission 1s. each person, the number of sitters being limited to twelve. Mr. Hopcroft will, if necessary, give us his services at a future date for the same object. Those intending to be present are requested to kindly communicate with the secretary, PERCY SMYTH, 68, Cornwall-road, Bayswater.

THE first number of the *Phonetic Journal* (Isaac Pitman's weekly shorthand journal) for this year is particularly interesting. In addition to the usual five large pages of shorthand, with key, it contains an amusing article from the pen of the well-known phonographer, Mr. T. A. Reed, on "How to save 6,000 years" by means of shorthand, and a chapter on the "Early Days of the Newspaper Press," forming the first of a series of articles on the "Newspaper World."

A THOUGHT is a rallying point stronger than any corporation. It creates its own movements, and they are the right ones. The bases of all parties, of all creeds, are shattered to-day and underlying all is the strange, powerful undercurrent of a Diviner order, which is uniting in a living band those who have received the baptism of the spirit.—*Hertha* (by ELIZABETH HUGHES), p. 43.

BOOKS, MAGAZINES, AND PAMPHLETS RECEIVED.

[Any acknowledgment of books received in this column neither precludes nor promises further notice.]

The Sun: A Magazine for all Readers. Vol. I., Part IV. (Price, 6d. E. W. Allen. Ave Maria Lane.

The International Magazine of Truth. (New York: 13, West 42nd-street. 2dol. a year.) [A magazine devoted to "Christian Science" on a broad and comprehensive basis. Contents varied and instructive. Miss A. A. Chevallier edits well, and her printers do credit to her work.]

Lucifer (December 15th). (The Theosophical Publishing Co. Price, 1s. 6d.) [Contains "The Fall of Ideals"; the conclusion of Mrs. Besant's "Memory," an article on "The Alchemists," and one on "Christmas Peace" by the Rev. G. W. Allen. "Thanatos" is a striking little poem, and "Rest" a no less striking allegory.]

Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research. Part XV. Price, 3s. [Contains an address by the President on "The Canons of Evidence in Psychical Research"; a paper on "Apparitions Occurring More than a Year After Death," by Mr. F. W. H. Myers; "Some Notes of Séances with D. D. Home," by Mr. Crookes, F.R.S.; and other matter of interest.]

The English Illustrated Magazine. (Macmillans. Price, 6d.) [Contains a vigorous poem by Alfred Austin "Is Life Worth Living?" Also the second of a "Cycle of Love Lyrics." Words by Joseph Bennett. Music by Hamish MacCunn. A charming paper by Mrs. Lecky on "Dutch Girlhood." And a continuation of Lord Lytton's "Ring of Amasis." Illustrations of steadily increasing merit. Paper and type excellent.]

New Review. (Longmans. Price, 6d.) [A strong list of contributors. Swinburne's "Swimmer's Dream"; a Symposium on "Candour in English Fiction," contributed by Walter Besant, Mrs. Lynn Linton, and Thos. Hardy; Lady Dilke on "Trades' Unionism for Woman"; Rider Haggard on "The Fate of Swaziland"; Edmund Gosse on "Browning"; the second part of Henry James's "Solution"; and other unsigned papers. A marvellous sixpenny worth.]

TO CORRESPONDENTS.

It will ensure despatch if all matter offered for publication is addressed to the Editor of "LIGHT," 2, Duke-street, Adelphi, W.C., and not to any other name or address. Communications for the Manager should be sent separately.

It seems desirable to make clear that any facts previously published in transactions of any Society or in any journal cannot be printed as original matter in "LIGHT," and should not be sent to us except for our private information. All records sent, moreover, must be accredited by the name and address of the sender, and will gain in value by the attestation of witnesses.

The Editor begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to return rejected MSS. If accompanied by stamps to pay postage in case of its being deemed unsuitable for publication, he will use reasonable care in reposting any MS.

He also begs respectfully to intimate that he cannot undertake to prepare for the press communications that are not suitably written. He begs his correspondents to see that all articles and letters forwarded are written on one side of the paper, are ready for the printer, and are of moderate length. Those over a column in length are in danger of being crowded out.

G. P. S.—Very much gratified by your kind appreciation duly transmitted to us.

MADAME DE STEIGER, T. W., AND OTHER CORRESPONDENTS are thanked. Great pressure on space compels us to hold over some letters and articles.

K.—A thousand thanks for your kind words and true self-sacrifice. We are cheered and comforted by many kind opinions lately received, by none more than by yours.

A. M.—Thanks for subscription duly received and good wishes and complimentary estimate of "LIGHT" much valued. The apathy of Spiritualists is, as you say, astonishing. It is a deplorable thing.

S. F.—Thanks for letter, enclosure, and good wishes. The answer to "F. S." could not possibly apply to anything you wrote to us. It was in answer to a request to us to recommend a volume of poems.

S. K.—We did not intend to suggest that you should eschew any class of book, only that you should estimate them all on their individual merits. Much that passes for communications from the other world is mere trash. With this in your mind, by all means read everything. This was our own course when first our eyes were opened.

BEDFORD PARK, COLONEL OLCOTT AND MR. HENLY.—Mr. Henly desires to say, as a last word, that he disclaims all idea of making any attack on Colonel Olcott. He simply stated the fact that "member after member rose and declared that he did not agree with Colonel Olcott." Mr. Henly evidently had in his mind no other motive than to bring before his audience some account of Spiritualism as an antidote to Materialism. This he did, as we all do, in his own way, and is entitled to the credit of having voluntarily taken a burden on his own shoulders. The subject must now drop.

TO THE DEAF.—A Person cured of Deafness and noises in the head of 23 years' standing by a simple remedy will send a description of it FREE to any person who applies to NICHOLSON, 21, Bedford Square, London, W.C.